

MEMORIAL

OF

J. QUINN THORNTON,

PRAYING

The establishment of a Territorial Government in Oregon, and for appropriations for various purposes.

MAY 25, 1848.

Ordered to lie on the table, and be printed.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America :

Your memorialist, a citizen of Oregon Territory, respectfully asks your honorable body that he may be permitted to call your attention to the rise, progress, and present condition of the Territorial government of that interesting and important country, and to the circumstances surrounding its inhabitants. This your memorialist respectfully asks permission to do, in order that he may be able to call your attention to the pressing necessities and wants of the people.

[Historical notice of the colonization of Oregon.]

With a title to Oregon the government of the United States became involved in a protracted and intricate diplomatic controversy with the government of Great Britain respecting it. Through how many years of doubtful negotiation the correspondence proceeded; and how often the two nations were believed to be upon the eve of a rupture, are now subjects which have become a part of the history of both countries. At length, while the honorable the Secretary of State was laboriously engaged with his pen in a masterly vindication of our title to Oregon, the hardy and enterprising emigrant, unaccustomed to the forms and distinctions of diplomacy and the laws and usages of nations relating to such questions, resolved upon terminating the dispute in his own way, and according to his own views of right and wrong, by means of his rifle, axe, and ox goad. It may not become your memorialist to express even an opinion as to the extent of the influence which was thus exerted upon the negotiations which finally resulted in the settlement of the controversy by the establishment of the Oregon treaty, signed at Washington June 15, 1846, and ratified at London July 17, of the same year. It is, however, certain that during the pendency of the negotiations our citizens were forming prosperous settlements in the rich and beautiful valley of the Willamette, and were thus giving strength to our title resting upon occupancy. What- ever may have been the strength of the American title resting upon dis-

covery, exploration, cession, and contiguity, an actual possession of the country by an agricultural people was wanting to render that title clear and indisputable. Nothing was complete without this, and this the immigrants into Oregon gave to the nation with a firm reliance upon its sense of justice, for such liberal grants of land as would in part at least remunerate them for their pecuniary sacrifices and exhausting toil in performing the journey. In exchanging their former places of residence for a habitation in the wilderness between three and four thousand miles distant from the capital of that country to which they were still attached by the ties of duty, not less than those of admiration, kindred, and affection, they not only proposed to improve their condition by providing homes for themselves and for their offspring, but they believed that they would thus assist in bringing to an honorable and satisfactory termination a protracted and harassing dispute. And if, impressed with the solemn conviction that territorial disputes have at all times been found a fertile source of national hostility, and that most of the wars that have desolated the earth have thus originated, they have in any degree been instrumental in averting strife between two great nations, the language, laws, and commercial interests of which should unite in a lasting peace, they ought not to be made to feel that even their most pressing wants are neglected or forgotten.

The immigrants also flattered themselves that in forming settlements upon the distant shores of the Pacific, they would be made the honored instruments, in the hands of the Great Ruler of nations, for establishing the institutions of Christianity, civilization, and liberty, in

“the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound
Save his own dashings.”

Without intending to expatriate themselves from their country, or to renounce their citizenship in the land of their nativity for a home in Oregon, they cheerfully exposed themselves in small parties to the dangers and perils of a long and exhausting journey of many months, through hostile Indian tribes, and over arid deserts and bleak mountains. Having arrived at the end of their journey, with their little fortunes wrecked by the difficulties of the way, and with their bodies broken down by the fatigues of their long continued travel, they were at once exposed, not to the hardships and privations incident to the settlement of all new countries, but to those which were peculiar to their isolated condition; cut off as they were from the society and sympathies of civilized life, far distant from the inhabited borders of their native land, between which and them there was a vast region traversed by roving tribes of Indians, whose hands are against every man, and whose predatory habits are the source of continued annoyance and danger.

The thievish propensities of the savages of the country, also, in which the immigrants settled, were likewise a cause of unceasing irritation and disquietude, and especially so since they were without an arm of the national defence to protect them, and without the weapons and ammunition necessary to enable them to protect themselves. In their immediate vicinity, too, were the subjects of a Princess, claiming the right to exercise a sovereign jurisdiction over the country, and possessing the power to crush the rising colony in its infancy, either by the force of arms, or by refusing to sell to them the supplies necessary to their existence. If political considerations prevented the former, and benevolence and good will a

resort to the latter expedient, the immigrants nevertheless felt that they were in the power of a people whose interests were inimical to their own.

In addition to these embarrassing and untoward circumstances, while the subjects of the British empire were covered by the protecting ægis of its laws, the American immigrants, although from year to year they hoped to see the paternal care of their government extended over them, were from time to time doomed to bitter disappointment, and to realize that they were without just and equitable laws to govern them, and to feel that they occupied the extraordinary and in every way anomalous position of a people who, without having either renounced their country, or been renounced by it, were nevertheless without one.

We love to dwell with something more than even classic reverence upon the story of our pilgrim fathers, who, landing upon the bleak coast of New England, established a State, without a king, more lasting than the rock upon which they disembarked. The heart of the patriot, too, swells with emotions of a just and honorable pride, and with gratitude to a watchful and guiding Providence, as he reads the history of the colonization of Jamestown, and observes so many instances of self-sacrifice, and of hardships and privations, borne with a high degree of the most heroic fortitude. But your memorialist trusts that he may be permitted to express the opinion, that all history, both ancient and modern, may be challenged to furnish an instance of colonization so replete with difficulties met and overcome, so fraught with circumstances of discouragements sustained and submitted to, as those which characterized the settlement of the beautiful and fertile valley of the Wilhamette. Distant from the land of their nativity, surrounded by restless tribes of Indians, who clamorously and insolently demanded of the immigrants pay for lands which the immigrants had neither the means nor the right to purchase; still ardently desiring to have their names and their destiny connected with that of the republic; and yet, often pierced to the heart by the thought, which would sometimes, unbidden, obtrude itself upon the mind, that they were the victims of their country's neglect and injustice; and suffering all the inconveniences and embarrassments which are necessarily felt by a resident and civilized community without a system of laws for the conservation of peace and order, they were at length compelled to organize and put in operation a provisional form of government.

In performing this arduous and difficult labor, so necessary to the removal of a suspense that rendered the people discontented and unhappy, and of an uncertainty that discouraged their efforts, and depressed their energies, they had to meet and remove obstacles to the administration of a temporary system of government, which are unknown in establishing one of a permanent form; yet, fully impressed with the solemn conviction that it was better to unite the sinews of government in the hands of even a single despot and tyrant, than to encounter the anarchy and confusion of a multitude without law, they addressed themselves to the task, difficult as it was, feeling that they merited the respectful consideration of your honorable body, and that at least they would no longer be wanting in duty to themselves.

The first effort which was made with a view to the organization of a civil government in Oregon was made at Champoege, which at that time was the seat of the principal settlement in the Wilhamette valley. This was on the seventh of February, 1841, when, as the record shows, "a

meeting of some of the inhabitants was held" "for the purpose of consulting upon the steps necessary to be taken for the formation of laws, and the election of officers to execute the same." The late Rev. Jason Lee, at that time the superintendent of the Methodist mission among the Indians of Oregon, was called to the chair. He advised the selection of a committee for the purpose of draughting "a constitution and code of laws for the government of the settlements south of the Columbian river."

The names of persons regarded by the meeting as suitable were recommended to the people at large for governor, and for all other necessary officers. A resolution was also passed "that all settlers north of the Columbia river, not connected with the Hudson's Bay Company, be admitted to the protection of our laws, on making application to that effect." On the 18th of the same month, persons were elected to fill the various offices, and they were instructed "to act according to the laws of New York," until other laws were adopted. They did not, however, enter upon the discharge of their duties. At a meeting held on the first of July, of the same year, the committee which had been appointed, at the meeting of February 7th, to draught a constitution and laws were, instructed to confer with Capt. Wilkes, U. S. N., and John McLaughlin, esq. After this conference it was decided by a majority to be inexpedient, at that time, to proceed with the contemplated organization, and that the moral sense of right and wrong, by which the people had up to that time been held together as a community, was sufficient. The real cause, however, of this diversity of expression did not, perhaps, arise so much from the conviction that a civil government was unnecessary, as from a sense of an inability to pay the officers a just compensation. The people were few in number, greatly reduced in their pecuniary circumstances, occupying portions of the country remote from each other; engaged in felling forests, cultivating fields, and in other ways giving their utmost attention to supplying the pressing wants of themselves and their families. They were, too, without either books, (excepting one copy of the Iowa Statutes,) to which to refer for assistance in framing their laws, or a press upon which to print them when framed.

The difficulties and inconveniences incident to the peculiar condition of the colonists being more sensibly felt, and all realizing, at length, that something more efficient than a moral sense was requisite to the suppression of wrong and the maintenance of right, a meeting of the citizens was held on the first Monday of March, 1847, to consider "the propriety of taking some measures for the civil and military protection of the colony," and for the purpose of taking "into consideration" "measures for the protection" of the herds against wolves and panthers. At this meeting civil and military officers were elected, the latter being instructed to form one or more companies of mounted riflemen. A legislative committee, consisting of nine persons, was also appointed to draught a constitution and code of laws, with instructions to report at Champoeg on the fifth of July. This committee having finished the task assigned to it, reported a constitution establishing a provisional government, with a triumvirate executive styled "the Executive Committee."

The laws reported by this committee, although subsequently amended, prove that while they were not faultless, yet that the "legislative committee" had not proceeded rashly in laying the foundation of the civil

superstructure. The great and only very material error committed was in the peculiar form given to the Executive.

The deliberations of the committee seem to have been characterized by dignity, moderation, and a respectful deference to each other's opinions. Their previous habits had not fitted them for debate; they received no compensation, and the condition of their domestic interests made it necessary for them to hasten away from the log-cabin in which they legislated, and to return to their respective farms. Receiving no per diem allowance for their services, and the community which they represented being small and possessing but little political consideration, neither lucre nor glory allured to office, and they were therefore not under the influence of the seductions of either interest or ambition, prompting them to consume time in making speeches for effect upon a constituency that felt itself obliged to men of integrity and capacity who would accept of office. It is not wonderful, therefore, that "the legislative committee" addressed itself to its labor with energy and in good faith.

The following extract from the laws passed at that session will show the method proposed for defraying the expense of sustaining the provisional government during the fiscal year commencing July 5th, 1843, and ending June 18th, 1844: "That subscription papers, as follows, be put in circulation to collect funds for defraying the expenses of this government.

"We, the undersigned, hereby pledge ourselves to pay annually to the treasurer of Oregon Territory the sum affixed to our respective names, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of government: *Provided*, That in all cases each individual subscriber may at any time withdraw his name from the said subscription upon paying up all arrearages, and notifying the treasurer of the colony of such desire to withdraw."

The large immigration that came into the country in the autumn of 1843 assisted in affecting alterations in the face of the country, and in subsequent legislation. The organic law was regarded as being in some respects defective, and the land law was objectionable in some of its provisions.

In May, 1844, the people elected a second "executive committee" and a second "legislative committee." About that time the public records began to assume a connected form.

On the 18th June, 1844, "the legislative committee," having assembled at the falls of the Willamette, and received the first message of "the executive committee," proceeded to reconstruct the government. The executive power was united in a single hand, the legislative powers were regulated and defined, a judiciary system was established, and an act was passed, the object of which was to create a revenue equal to the wants of an economical administration of the government.

The organic law thus passed by the legislative committee was adopted by the people, and is the present basis of the municipal regulations of the people of Oregon. Your memorialist having been informed that your honorable body is already in possession of a copy of this organic law, deems it unnecessary to make a more particular reference to it.

The second legislative committee having reorganized the government, and performed much labor during a session of nine days, adjourned June 20th.

The legislative committee again assembled at Oregon city December 16th, and continued in session eight days. Much important business was

transacted ; but as the laws enacted do not particularly relate to the present wants of the people, so far as these would probably be affected by the action of your honorable body, your memorialist does not believe it to be necessary to refer to them with more minuteness. It may not, however, be improper to state, in this connexion, that a few persons, respectable for their character and influence in Oregon, discussed about this time the question of the expediency and necessity of an independent instead of a provisional government. It was said that the geographical position of the country being such as to place it at so great a distance from the seat of the metropolitan government as to make it almost impossible to present the wants and wishes of the people, rendered the measure not only expedient, but necessary. The real cause, however, for this movement, was the discontent and even resentment felt in consequence of their seeming to have been left without protection, and in a state indicating abandonment by their country. They could not realize the difficulties with which the negotiations upon the subject of the title were beset, and hence they were not in a condition to appreciate the motives of the general government for the delay ; but happily for them and the people of Oregon, the proposition was not favorably received. The people very generally looked forward with honest pride and hope to the time when the flag of their country would again wave above them, a visible sign that they had not been forgotten in their distant homes.

In the spring of 1845, his Excellency George Abernethy was elected the first governor of Oregon.

The appearance upon the Columbia of the United States schooner *Shark*, in 1846, cheered the hearts of our citizens in that distant territory ; and upon the stars and stripes being displayed, they were greeted by the spontaneous shouts of our people, whose minds were filled with a thousand glorious memories which clustered about the emblem of their country's nationality. An ensign and union-jack being among the few articles preserved from the unfortunate wreck of that vessel, these were, with peculiar appropriateness, presented to the provisional government of Oregon, through his Excellency George Abernethy, by Lieut. Niel M. Howison, the late commander of the *Shark*. This was emphatically the first flag of the United States that waved over the undisputed and purely American territory of Oregon, for it was about the 22d of February, 1847, that a confirmation of the news of the Oregon treaty was received. Powder sufficient for a national salute having with great difficulty been procured, the flag of our country was flung to the breeze on the anniversary of the birthday of Washington, and at midday a national salute was fired from an old rusty and dismantled gun, which had been given to us by a merchantman.

Every reasonable obstruction to the extension of the laws and jurisdiction of the United States over Oregon, arising out of the pendency of negotiations upon the title, having been removed by the Oregon treaty, our citizens expected, and they had a right to expect, that they would no longer be permitted to occupy their anomalous and extraordinary position. They could not believe that any local causes would be permitted to operate so as to prevent them from receiving that protection which was not a favor to be granted, but a right, which was not the less a right because of the circumstance of that weakness which has rendered it necessary for them to beset your honorable body again and again with memorials, which up to this time are unheeded. It was with grief and astonishment, therefore,

that the people were informed by the immigrants who arrived in September, 1847, that your honorable body had adjourned without having done anything to relieve them from their peculiarly embarrassing, and, considered with reference to the Indians, even dangerous position. Your memorialist refers to it as a peculiarly embarrassing position, because, the provisional government having a right to expect that the jurisdiction and laws of the United States would be extended over Oregon, it could not legislate efficiently and usefully so long as it was believed that a few brief months would bring in a new government, and perhaps entirely new measures and laws. A multitude of evils, which no one who has not lived in the country can understand or appreciate, spring out of this uncertainty. Had the general government of the United States informed the provisional government of Oregon that nothing would be done within the next ten years, then, while the people would without doubt have expressed their profound regret, yet they would at least have been relieved from that uncertainty and doubt which had previously so greatly paralyzed their efforts. They would immediately have commenced a useful and permanent system of legislation; and at the termination of the ten years, Oregon would have been ready to enter the American constellation as one of the very brightest stars in it. As it was, however, the intelligence was received with the profoundest sorrow, and a universal gloom pervaded the community as the conviction forced itself upon the mind, that they were again left to the serious inconveniences arising out of their extraordinary position, and to the perilous circumstances in which they were involved by being without arms and ammunition in the midst of savages clamorously demanding pay for their lands, and not unfrequently committing the most serious injuries by seizing property and by taking life, in consequence of the people having neither the ability nor the right to buy.

[For an act establishing a Territorial government in Oregon.]

A number of individuals from different portions of the Wilhamette valley at length met in Yamhill county, when a committee was appointed to draught a memorial praying for the passage of a law establishing a Territorial government in Oregon. That memorial was addressed to the Hon. Thomas H. Benton, and placed in the letter-bag of the barque Whiton, then in the Wilhamette, and about to sail. Some time afterwards it was proposed to elect a delegate to Congress. This was at length decided to be impracticable, because, 1st, we had no law authorizing such an election; 2d, because, if we had, there was not then time to give the notice, and do it before the only vessel would sail that could convey the delegate to the United States; 3d, because Congress not having passed a law establishing a territorial government, there was no law of the United States under which a delegate could demand to be received; and, 4th, it was not deemed expedient to elect a delegate with the expectation that a seat in the House of Representatives would be yielded to him from courtesy and the necessity of the case. Under the circumstances, therefore, the question was solemnly asked—Can nothing be done? To your memorialist it was said, that his position as judge of the supreme court of the Territory would probably cause your honorable body to confide in his representations and statements, and he was therefore urged to proceed immediately to the seat of the metropolitan government, and to rely upon your magnanimity and sense of justice for a compensation, in some manner, for his time, and the money which he might expend in the discharge of

the duties imposed upon him by his entering upon the mission. I need not say that there was not a dollar in the treasury to meet these expenses. Your memorialist having received a letter from the governor of Oregon to the President of the United States, stating the nature and objects of the mission, and, for reasons already mentioned, written not as an official but as a private letter, your memorialist proceeded without delay on board the barque *Whiton*, to St. Jose, in Lower California, from which port he was conveyed to Boston on board the United States sloop-of-war *Portsmouth*. With these explanations as to the position which he occupies, your memorialist prays your honorable body for the immediate passage of a law establishing a Territorial government in Oregon.

Your memorialist believes, when your honorable body shall have been made acquainted with the embarrassing circumstances in which your fellow-citizens of Oregon are situated, that, although you have done nothing for them up to this time, yet you will not—nay, you cannot—be guilty of the monstrous injustice of permitting an omission to extend to them the protection of the laws of their native country to mark another year. You have hitherto permitted this unhappy omission because of the impossibility of your knowing the real condition and wants of your brethren in that distant land. But now that you may obtain this information through one who has been an observer of the wants and condition of the country, he is sure that you will do that which will show how unreasonable were the allegations which some of the desponding immigrants have made, of cold indifference, and even of a criminal neglect.

Your memorialist is also encouraged to hope for prompt and efficient action upon this subject, from a consideration of the additional fact that the Oregon treaty has removed every obstacle which could be referred to as a reason for not granting to the colonists of Oregon the protection of the laws of their country, and the means of defence against the Indian tribes. And your memorialist would respectfully suggest, that it would ill comport with the character of a great nation to urge, that protection could not be *afforded* to a people whose duty and allegiance have been tested by almost every variety of circumstance. Surely it will not be said that because the people of Oregon have done well in establishing a government in the administration of which internal order has been maintained to an extent equal to that of any State of the Union, that therefore they may be neglected, and exposed to the brutal outrages of ruthless savages upon their borders and in their midst. This would be making their well doing a misfortune, by withholding their rights. The continued expectation that their government will be superseded, prevents them from doing for themselves what their exigencies demand, and that which they might otherwise do. They are, therefore, weary of a *quasi* independence, and would rejoice to yield it up for something that may not be changed by the arrival of the next vessel that enters the Columbia.

Had your fellow-citizens of Oregon and the subjects of her Britannic Majesty who reside in the Territory, by cherishing for each other a feeling of hostility and rancorous enmity, become embroiled in an unnatural strife, instead of cultivating a spirit of benevolence, friendship, and good will, honorable alike to both, the jurisdiction and laws of the United States would have been extended over that distant territory. This would have been done also, if the country, instead of now presenting an example of industry and (if the depredations of the Indians be excepted) tranquillity, also unpar-

alleled in the history of new colonies, had exhibited a scene of anarchy, confusion, and bloodshed, unworthy of their origin and of the destiny of the country of their adoption. But how much better is it to extend the laws over a people already in the enjoyment of many of the blessings of a peaceful and well ordered State, than to be under the necessity of interposing your authority as a shield to prevent them from staining their hands with fraternal blood. Although they have felt an unconquerable desire for self-government—a desire nurtured and educated under the republican institutions of the land of their birth—yet their position has been so peculiar that they have felt the impossibility, under the circumstances, of making full provision for their present and future protection; and they have, therefore, husbanded their resources under a temporary government, cherishing a hope which they believed to be reasonable, that as soon as a suitable opportunity presented itself, a law would be passed establishing a Territorial government. The settlement of the boundary question seemed to present that opportunity for the fulfilment of their most ardent hopes and the consummation of their most devout wishes. The extension of the laws of the United States over the people, was an event looked to as promising a remedy for evils growing out of the fact that there were many important subjects upon which the provisional legislature had not, under the circumstances, the power to legislate. It was an event looked for, also, as one that would give additional importance to the country, and a new impulse to trade and commerce, and would satisfy the mind upon the subject of a grant of lands.

That this anxiety was both reasonable and natural, would appear by adverting to the peculiarly interesting history of the country. For several years without any government except that which reason imposes, and without a law of any kind except the law of love, the penalties for the violation of which were inflicted by the conscience only, the people peacefully pursued their occupations during six days of the week, and on the seventh quietly assembled to listen to the preaching of the late Rev. Jason Lee, or to that of some of his fellow-laborers in the missionary field. It might be said of Oregon, with peculiar truth and propriety, "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes." But time brought changes, and in these changes originated the absolute necessity for that provisional government under which has grown up a prosperous and virtuous community, mature in its development, notwithstanding the population is a mixed one.

These facts connected with the history of the colonization of Oregon being made known to your honorable body, your memorialist cannot believe that the wants and the wishes of the people will be any longer disregarded.

[For a recognition of all private contracts, and all legislative and judicial acts, and for the transferring of suits, &c., to the new courts.]

Your memorialist would further represent that, under the organic law of Oregon and the enactments of the provisional legislature, contracts have been made, marriages have been entered into, divorces have been granted by the legislature and the judicial tribunals of the country; that judgments in courts of law have been rendered, and decrees in courts of chancery have been made, some of which have been satisfied, while

others remain unsatisfied ; and that actions and suits are still pending in the courts.

In order, therefore, that inextricable confusion and remediless wrong may not result from a change of government, your memorialist respectfully prays your honorable body that by the act establishing a Territorial government in Oregon, provision may be made for all suits, process, and proceedings, civil and criminal, at law and in equity, and all indictments and informations which shall be pending and undetermined in the courts established by the provisional government of Oregon, within the limits of said Territory when the said act shall take effect, being transferred to be heard, tried, prosecuted, and determined in the district courts thereby established, which may include the counties where any such proceedings may be pending ; and for all contracts, bonds, recognizances, and obligations of every kind whatsoever, valid under the existing laws within the limits of said Territory, being in like manner valid under the act which may be passed to establish a Territorial government in Oregon ; and for all crimes and misdemeanors against the laws now in force within said limits being prosecuted, tried, and punished in the courts which may be established by said act ; and for all penalties, forfeitures, actions, and causes of action, being recovered under said act, in like manner as they would have been under the laws in force within the limits of said Territory at the time the said act shall go into operation.

And your memorialist further prays that all justices of the peace, constables, sheriffs, and all other judicial and ministerial officers, who shall be in office within the limits of said Territory when the said act shall take effect, be authorized and required to continue to exercise and perform the duties of their respective offices, as officers of the Territory of Oregon, until they or others shall be duly appointed and qualified to fill their places in the manner therein directed, or until their offices shall be abolished.

[For the continuance of existing laws and offices until a regular change.]

Your memorialist prays that in the act which your honorable body may pass to establish a Territorial government in Oregon it may be declared that the existing laws in force in the said Territory, under the authority of the provisional government established by the people thereof, shall continue to be valid and operative therein, so far as the same be not incompatible with the principles and provisions of the said act, and until the end of the first session of the legislative assembly of said Territory ; and that the laws of the United States be thereby extended over, and declared to be in force in said Territory, so far as the same or any provision thereof may be applicable.

[For extinguishment of Indian title.]

Your memorialist prays that measures may be adopted for extinguishing the Indian title to western Oregon, and to such other portions as may be deemed necessary for future settlements.

[For grants of land to the immigrants now in the country.]

Your memorialist further prays that your honorable body will pass an act making provision for the immigrants now in the Territory, obtaining

liberal grants of land in said Territory upon condition of their continuing to reside therein during five years consecutively from the passage of the said act. This condition is necessary to prevent lands from passing into the hands of men who have no intention of remaining permanently in the country. The inhabitants now in the country believe that they have some claim to a confirmation of the title to the homes which they have made, based upon the promises implied in your repeated legislation, in the fact that they have overcome many of the difficulties of the journey to Oregon; and by their settlements have introduced agriculture and civilization upon our shores on the Pacific, and by doing so gave to the nation an actual occupancy, which was the only circumstance wanting to make the title to the country clear and unquestionable.

The people of Oregon believe that they have a claim to land, derived from the provisions of their organic law, also. It should be remembered that they found themselves without government of any kind, and that they were thrown back upon the original elements of society. Thus situated, they organized a civil government, put it in operation, and have ever since continued to maintain it. They have acquired rights under the third article of the organic law, which your memorialist prays your honorable body to recognise in their principle at least.

And your memorialist prays that the civilized half-breeds of the country who may become naturalized citizens, or who may declare their intention to become naturalized citizens, may receive the fostering care of the government; for there is too much reason to believe that if their rights of property should not be guarded by law, they would be wronged, and their homes would be taken from them.

[For other grants during a limited period.]

Your memorialist also prays that like grants of land may be made to persons immigrating into the country within a reasonable number of years, upon condition of a residence in the country of five consecutive years from the day of the commencement of said claim. And he prays your honorable body to make this continued residence at least five years.

Many reasons might be referred to for making these grants to future immigrants during a limited number of years. All who are conversant with the wants and wishes of the people, know that they desire that these grants may be made. And those who are acquainted with the geography and condition of the country cannot but know that colonization, rather than revenue, should be kept in view in all legislation having regard to the Pacific coast.

[For grants for educational purposes.]

Your memorialist respectfully prays that your honorable body would make suitable provision for educational purposes, by setting apart for that object the sixteenth and thirty-sixth sections of each township, and also one entire township on the north side of the Columbia, and one on the south side of the same river, being so located, under the authority of the Territorial legislature, as not to interfere with the rights of actual lawful claimants.

In a government like ours, resting upon the suffrages of the great body of the people, who not only in semblance, but in reality, have the care of their political institutions, the general diffusion of knowledge is necessary, in order that they may exercise their rights in a manner the most conducive to the prosperity of the nation, the preservation of its laws, and the purity of its legislative and judicial tribunals. The education and mental training of the youth of the country is absolutely necessary, to qualify them for the care of our political institutions, and that they may possess the ability to exercise the powers of government in a manner the most conducive to the preservation of their civil and religious liberty. All history shows that where the people have not been educated, they have always been the dupes of political demagogues, who were selfish rather than sagacious, and who learned to ruin by hollow pretences and professions of patriotism. Believing that the generous and ennobling sentiments to which his own breast is a stranger is a worthless and wicked pretence in others, he justifies himself in caressing a deluded and uneducated people he means to scourge as soon as they transfer their power to him.

If, an uneducated people do not fall into the hands of demagogues, yet they are sure, in time, to become the victims of the rapacity, avarice, and a thirst for power of another class who are even yet more dangerous, because they worship cunning, betray with a kiss, counterfeit wisdom, and so adroitly work upon the weakness, ignorance, and prejudices of their victims, that they at length obtain place as slimy reptiles are sometimes known, by a slow and laborious process, to arrive at the tops of pyramids.

But these political evils and social wrongs can be prevented by training the youth of the country in proper studies, and by animating them with a love of country and of virtue by the habitual contemplation of the character and example of distinguished American statesmen and warriors. Enlightened and instructed, they may set at naught the wicked designs of the hypocrite, who flatters and caresses those he means to sell as soon as he discovers that they are sufficiently debased to pass quietly and without resistance under the yoke of a new oppressor. But, if properly educated, the people will be able to sustain the institutions of the country not only against their own temporary excesses, but when their rulers contemplate wicked enterprises, and would cast down the ark of their country's liberty, they can extend their hands to stay that ark without danger of being smitten by death for presumption.

[For the extension of the revenue laws.]

Your memorialist would further represent that the failure to extend the revenue laws of the United States over Oregon, to establish a port of entry at the mouth of the Columbia river, and to appoint a collector, has operated injuriously. British subjects, engaged there in merchandise, have a greater amount of capital, more widely extended connexions, and cheaper and better goods, than the American merchants. But the collection of duties upon foreign goods, so far as this can be done consistently with the Oregon treaty, would place the American merchant in a better position, and, by affording an adequate protection as between the native and foreign merchant, create competition, and thus increase the amount of goods brought to the country, while it at the same time would reduce the prices. Under the present system, prices are enormously high,

being from three to four hundred per cent. in advance of the retail prices of the western States, after goods have paid a land and water carriage thither from the Atlantic seaboard.

[For an appropriation for a library.]

Your memorialist prays that the sum of ten thousand dollars may be appropriated, to be expended in the purchase of a library, to be kept at the seat of government for the use of the governor, secretary, legislature, judges, marshal, district attorney, and such other persons and under such regulations as may be prescribed by law. The fact that the inhabitable part of the Territory is so remote from the seat of the metropolitan government, and that access cannot be had to any books or libraries, is a circumstance rendering it expedient to make this appropriation much larger than might, under other circumstances, be necessary. The necessary books of reports in the department of law alone would cost a large sum, to say nothing of books upon the science of government, general politics, history, education, agriculture, horticulture, &c.

[For an appropriation to pay the public debt.]

On the first day of October, 1847, the public debt of Oregon was \$3,242 31, for which the treasury notes of the provisional government are now outstanding, having been issued to the officers of the government, to be held until redeemed in specie, or absorbed by taxation. This debt, it was believed, would necessarily be increased to about \$10,000, by the legislature which was expected to convene on the first Tuesday in December last. Your memorialist prays that a sum equal to the latter amount may be appropriated for the redemption of this debt. Oregon does not bring with her a large debt, a sanguinary war, and an expenditure of many millions; she is encumbered with a debt of a few thousand dollars incurred in the peaceful and rigidly economical administration of the civil government. She asks you to pay it. Justice demands it. The sum is far less than that which you would have expended had you governed the country yourselves.

[Columbia river.]

Your memorialist prays your honorable body to adopt some measures for the purpose of facilitating the arrival and departure of vessels trading into the mouth of the Columbia river. This is a subject of great importance to the people of Oregon, and the welfare of the country is intimately connected with it and essentially dependant upon it.

There can be no doubt in the minds of those personally acquainted with the geography of the country, that the people inhabiting it must be a commercial as well as an agricultural people. Preparations should therefore be made, at an early period, for shipping to enter the mouth of the Columbia.

[Appropriation for pilots.]

That the first requisite to this end is two experienced and sober pilots, there can be no doubt. There is now at the mouth of the Columbia river a bold and skilful pilot, but the number of vessels entering the river

being few, his compensation is probably too small to induce him to remain. Your memorialist prays that an appropriation of two thousand dollars may be made, so as to give a salary of one thousand dollars to each of two pilots. This would, by creating competition, cause them to be always vigilant, so as to obtain from vessels the usual compensation in addition to the salary.

But that something more is necessary cannot be questioned. An exhibition of facts will assist in determining what improvements are necessary to the removal of a great obstruction to the rapid advancement of the country in commercial prosperity. This object it is certain cannot be attained by concealing real difficulties to the entrance of that river, instead of pointing them out and suggesting the means of surmounting them.

[Accidents at the mouth of the river.]

In 1796, Captain Gray, of the American ship *Columbia*, from Boston, entered the river and attained to a position fifteen miles within the cape. This was the first ship to enter this river, which in consequence received the name of the vessel. The channel was found to be "neither broad nor plain," and the captain upon getting to sea again seemed to feel relieved from much anxiety. The discovery having been communicated to Captain Vancouver, he sent Lieut. Broughton in the *Chatham*, who, after exploring, attempted to pass out, in doing which his vessel shipped a sea.

In 1811, the *Tonquin*, owned by the late John Jacob Astor, arrived off the mouth of the river. Her captain sent a boat to sound out the channel. The crew perished in the breakers. Another boat was sent to rescue those in the first boat, but the crew of this boat all likewise perished, with the exception of one man.

In 1817, Captain Biddle, of the United States sloop-of-war *Ontario*, was sent to take possession of Astoria; but the sight of the breakers upon the bar caused him to regard its passage as hazardous.

In 1829 the Hudson's Bay Company's brig *William and Anne* was wrecked at the entrance, and all perished.

In 1831 the *Isabella*, belonging to the same company, was wrecked, but the crew survived.

In 1839, Sir Edward Belcher surveyed the bar in his Britannic Majesty's ship *Sulphur*, which grounded several times.

In July, 1841, the United States sloop of war *Peacock* was wrecked. Captain Wilkes, in his sailing directions, describes it as "exceedingly dangerous, from the force and irregularity of the tides, shifting character of the sands, and great distance of any land-marks, as guides."

In September, 1846, the United States schooner *Shark* was wrecked, in an attempt to pass out. Her late commander, however, says, that "the introduction of steam, and the presence of good pilots, would render the passage over the bar comparatively safe."

In addition to the usual calms, the mouth of the Columbia river is likewise subject to those caused by Cape Disappointment, and the adjacent highlands. It is also subject to currents, the direction of which varies with the rise and fall of the tide. The difficulties attending the taking of vessels up that river during the rainy season are greatly increased by the winds, which then usually blow down it. These are, however, all difficulties capable of being entirely removed by the use of appropriate

and obvious means: without these, it will be conceded that real dangers exist. Indeed, the historical facts to which your memorialist has briefly referred, are in themselves sufficient to prove that the dangers are not imaginary.

It ought not to be concealed that, in the rainy season, vessels are sometimes prevented from entering the river during thirty or forty days; and that others, during the same season, are prevented during an equal length of time from departing from the river. The currents of the Columbia are strong, and the channels little known, except to those who make it their business to become acquainted with its important changes. The repugnance to entering that river, which has been felt in consequence of the loss of the Peacock, is almost invincible. The effect of all these causes, when combined, has been a very great injury to Oregon. The unfortunate loss of the Shark threw another obstacle in the way of the commercial advancement of that Territory. But these vessels were not lost because there was not a channel sufficiently deep and broad for them, but because that channel was not known, and could not be supposed to be known, to the respective commanders.

[Remote consequences of these dangers.]

Nothing perhaps has tended more to retard the growth and prosperity of the country, than the unwillingness of the whalers and merchantmen to enter the river. The people have, in consequence, been unable to dispose of the produce of their lands, whilst, at the same time, they have been under the necessity of paying the most exorbitant prices to merchants who, being without competition, are charged with establishing their own prices.

The following list will enable your honorable body to see the prices of Oregon generally, and not those of the merchant only:

- Flour per barrel, \$7 to \$8.
- Pork per barrel, \$10.
- Beef per cwt., \$6.
- Beans per bushel, \$4.
- Coarse split-bottomed chairs, without paint, per dozen, \$24.
- Plain rocking-chairs, without paint, \$15.
- Butter per pound, 25 cents.
- Lard per pound, 12½ cents.
- Tallow per pound, 10 cents.
- Oats per bushel, 50 cents.
- Day laborers, \$1 to \$1 50.
- Rails per 100, \$1.
- Hauling per 100, \$1.
- Mechanics per day, \$3 to \$5.
- Horse-hire per day, \$1 50.
- Horses, small and indifferent, \$40 to \$80.
- Wood per cord, \$3 to \$4.
- Oxen per yoke, \$50 to \$80.
- Wagons, second hand, \$100 to \$200.
- Flour barrels, \$1.
- Fir lumber per 1,000 feet, \$20.

- Pine, \$40.
- Potatoes per bushel, 75 cents to \$1.
- Turnips per bushel, 62½ cents.
- Common wash-stand, \$10.
- Plain dining table, \$15.
- Stocking a plough, \$4 to \$6.
- Pickled salmon per barrel, \$10.
- Boarding per week, \$3 50 to \$4 50.
- Cows, \$20 to \$50.
- American work-horses, \$100 to \$150.
- Sheep per head, \$5.
- Cheese per lb., 25 cents.
- Shingles per thousand, \$4.
- Hewed timber, square and delivered, per foot from 6 to 9 cents.
- Medium Irish linen, \$2 to \$3.
- Coarse gray cassimere per yard, \$5.
- Coarse gray cloth, \$7.
- Fine blue, \$13.
- Medium handsaw, \$3 50.
- Wood-saw, \$3 25.
- Second and third quality of felling axes, \$3 75.
- Medium white flannel per yard, \$1 25.
- Coarse calico per yard, 40 to 75 cents.
- Lead per lb., 20 cents.
- Powder, coarse and indifferent, 50 cents.
- Coarse brown sugar per lb., 12½ cents.
- Sirup per gallon, indifferent, 75 cents.
- Molasses, indifferent, per gallon, 60 cents.
- White lead in oil, per lb., 28 cents.
- Window glass, such as would not sell here at any price, per box, \$8 to \$10.
- Putty per lb., 20 cents.
- Coffee, indifferent quality, 33½ cents.
- Cast steel spades, \$3.
- Iron per lb., 12½ cents.
- Wrought iron ploughs per lb., 50 cents.
- Indifferent salt per bushel, \$1.
- Russia duck, \$1.
- Hyson tea, \$1 50.
- Rice per lb., 12½ cents.
- Cradling scythes, \$3 50.
- Smoothing irons, \$2.
- Writing paper per quire, 75 cents.
- Medium silk pocket handkerchiefs, \$2.
- Fine shoes, at the shop, \$5 50.
- Fine boots, at the shop, \$12 to \$15.
- Very coarse boots, made in the States, \$8.
- Coarse cotton handkerchiefs, 50 cents.
- Coarse half hose, \$1.
- Percussion caps per box, \$2.
- Drawing knives, \$3 to \$5.
- Tools of every kind very high.

Nails per lb., 25 cents.

Cooking stoves, medium size and pattern, \$70 to \$80.

Cast iron ploughs, stocked, \$30 to \$45.

Long coarse wool hats, \$3.

But the absence of competition has not been the only element of the high prices of the merchant. The great length of the voyage to Oregon, the hazards to which they have been exposed in entering the river, and the time which said vessels lose in proceeding to their places of destination up the river, necessarily increasing the expense, are probably also important elements of the high prices complained of.

[Means by which these evils may be avoided.]

Whatever may be the extent of the obstructions to the entrance of the mouth of the Columbia, it is at least certain that pilots, lights, buoys, and a steam tug-boat, would make it, for vessels that can pass the bar, one of the finest harbors in the world. It is conceded that nature has not done everything which art and human industry can do to make it all that it is desirable it should be, or to make its present entrance safe and easy; yet if the labor and expenditure of money to which necessity excites is recompensed by the attainment, to the fullest extent, of the object sought for, that labor and expenditure should not be withheld.

At the time your memorialist left the Columbia river, for the seat of the metropolitan government, Mr. Reeve, the skilful and enterprising pilot at that place, was exerting himself to procure by subscription a sum of money that would enable him to build a small log light-house upon the high land of Cape Disappointment. But your memorialist is not yet prepared to believe that your honorable body will permit a handful of men, in a small, distant, and poor community in Oregon, still laboring under all the inconveniences incident to their peculiar, isolated, and neglected condition, to build light-houses for you.

Your memorialist asks leave to call your attention in this place to an extract from the report of the late Lieutenant Niel M. Howison, United States navy, to the commander of the Pacific squadron, printed by order of the House of Representatives, February 29, 1848. He says:

"The granaries are surcharged with wheat; the saw-mills are surrounded with piles of lumber as high as themselves; the grazier sells his beef at three cents per pound to the merchant, who packs it in salt and deposits it in a warehouse, awaiting the tardy arrival of some vessel to take a portion of his stock at what price she pleases, and furnish in return a scanty supply of tea and sugar and indifferent clothing, also at her own rate. I feel it particularly my duty to call the attention of government to this subject. This feeble and distant portion, of itself, is vainly struggling to escape from burdens which, from the nature of things, must long continue to oppress it, unless parental assistance comes to its relief. The first measure necessary is to render the entrance and egress of vessels into the mouth of the Columbia as free from danger as possible; and the first step towards this is to employ two competent pilots, who should reside at Cape Disappointment, be furnished with two Baltimore-built pilot boats, (for mutual assistance in case of accident to either,) and be paid a regular salary, besides the fees, which should be very moderate, imposed upon each enter-

ing vessel. A light-house and some beacons, with and without lights, would aid very much in giving confidence and security to vessels approaching the river; but more important than all these would of course be the presence, under good management, of a strong and well-built steam-tug. The effects of these facilities would be to render certain; at least during the summer months, the coming in and going out of vessels, subtract from the premium on insurance, and give confidence to the seamen, who now enter for a voyage to Oregon with dread, reluctance, and high wages. It is not for me to anticipate the boundless spring which the vivifying influence of an extended organized commerce would give to the growth and importance of this country: its portrait has been drawn by abler hands, in books and in the Senate, but I must take leave to suggest that good policy requires the parent government to retain the affections of this hopeful offspring by attentions and fostering care: it needs help at this moment; and if it be rendered, a lasting sense of dependence and gratitude will be the consequence; but if neglected in this its tender age, and allowed to fight its own way to independent maturity, the ties of consanguinity may be forgotten in the energy of its own unaided exertions."

It cannot be doubted that something is necessary to be done, which shall make the Columbia river at all times easy of ingress and egress; it only remains to show at how very small an expense, when compared with what has been expended in harbors, or at the mouths of rivers on the Atlantic coast, this can be accomplished. Light-houses, beacons, buoys, and breakwaters, or sheltered anchorages, have uniformly received the attention of your honorable body, as affecting the commerce and general welfare of the country, and the revenue of the government. The revenue cutter service, designed originally for the mere protection of the revenue against smuggling, is often employed during a considerable portion of the year in the direct assistance of vessels of all classes approaching our Atlantic coast. This service has been eminently approved by the great body of the nation, because it recommends itself to the humanity of the people, and to private interest not less than to the interest of the general government. And the system of lights, beacons, buoys, and steam-tugs, whether ordered by the general government, or the results of a sense of private interest, all tend directly to the same end, by lessening the dangers of the seas and of the approaches to our Atlantic coast.

Although the people of Oregon have been living a long time upon the Pacific side of the coast, without the protection of the laws of their country, your memorialist believes that humanity is the same, or very nearly the same, there, that it is here; and that men there, as here, when they are by any means enabled to discover in what their interest consists, will usually approve of whatever tends to promote it.

To make the Columbia safe at all times in entering and departing, it is only necessary to combine these safeguards in such a manner as the present improvements and experience will permit.

A revenue cutter will be needed at the mouth of the Columbia. Since steam-vessels are now coming into general use in this service, it is only necessary to combine the revenue cutter with a steam-tug, combining all the qualities required in a steam coast-guard with those of a powerful tug or tow-boat, and to keep it usually stationed in Baker's bay, for the purpose of not only preventing smuggling, but also for towing merchant vessels and whalers in and out at that season when they are most exposed to de-

lays and dangers. The same vessel could also take out the buoys for indicating the channel, and the lanterns for the light-houses, and the officers could be employed in superintending the erection of those houses.

[Remote advantages resulting from the use of the necessary means.]

The advantage resulting from affording these facilities to a country, which, in addition to its commercial importance, must always be the great agricultural section of the Pacific coast, would be immense. It would afford the people a remedy for the evil of enormous prices by encouraging merchantmen to come into the Columbia. It would, by encouraging industry, increase a production equal to the supply of the wants of your navy on the Pacific station. In two years from the time of placing a steam tow-boat and buoys at the mouth of the Columbia river, the beef, bread, flour, beans, &c., for the entire Pacific squadron, could be purchased in Oregon as cheap as they could be bought upon this side of the continent. This would, by creating a market, stimulate production. It would save shipment; and in addition to this, the provisions being always fresh, would not, as is frequently now done upon that coast, be condemned, and thrown overboard. A call for information from the honorable the Secretary of the Navy would show that immense quantities of bread are annually condemned upon the Pacific coast as spoiled.

That Oregon would within two years, in addition to furnishing food for land troops, produce enough to supply the navy upon the Pacific station, is rendered probable by the following table of the productions of Oregon for the year 1846, as in part ascertained by assessors, and in part being estimates:

	Wheat—bush.	Oats—bush.	Peas—bush.	Potatoes—bush.
Polk -	20,000	14,720	5,200	6,100
Yamhill -	24,546	5,217	1,009	10,076
Twality -	33,000	21,000	5,400	13,000
Clatsop -	8,000	5,217	6,400	7,000
Lewis -	12,450	9,250	4,475	5,760
Vancouver -	21,000	15,700	6,200	7,080
Clackamus -	19,867	12,140	4,900	9,000
Champoege -	6,000	36,000	12,420	21,400
	<u>144,863</u>	<u>129,244</u>	<u>46,004</u>	<u>73,416</u>

In the month of April, 1847, there were exported 1,736 barrels of flour.

When your memorialist left Oregon, November 4th, it was believed that 180,000 bushels of wheat had been produced. The *Whiton* was principally laden with Oregon flour. The *Janet* was spoken off the mouth of the river, and was going in for a load that was in readiness for her to carry away. The brig *Henry* sailed about the same time, having a considerable portion of her cargo in flour. It was estimated that 4,000 persons had just arrived in the country, and yet flour was selling no higher than \$7 50 per barrel.

It will be observed that no notice is here taken of beef and salmon, both of which, and especially the latter, may be put up to a large amount.

Nor are mills wanting, at which to grind the wheat when grown, there being at least eight.

The capacity of the country for future production will be estimated by a little attention to a few facts. Dr. Marcus Whitman, who formerly resided in the great wheat-growing country of Genesee, New York, and who has been during several years a missionary in Oregon, expressed to your memorialist the opinion that Oregon as a wheat-producing country was, to say the very least, not inferior to the Genesee valley. He regarded middle Oregon as perhaps better adapted to the raising of sheep than any country in the world.

The farmer in Oregon possesses many advantages over those in the States. The latter, with an ordinary stock of cattle, is usually compelled by the severity of the winter to feed to them in that season all, or nearly all, that he has grown during spring, summer, and autumn. In Oregon the winter is much milder than it is on the Atlantic side, several degrees farther south. The grass frequently grows all winter. The Rev. George Gary, the late superintendent of the Oregon mission, informed your memorialist that on the 25th December, 1845, he ate green peas grown in the open air in his garden in Oregon city, and taken from it on that day. Oregon city, if your memorialist is not mistaken, is in latitude $45^{\circ} 20'$ north. The winter, commencing November 1st, 1846, and ending March 1st, 1847, was more severe than any that had preceded it in 36 years. The mercury in Fahrenheit's scale fell at one time, at Oregon city, to 2° above zero; at Nisqually, Puget's sound, to 6° below zero; and at the Dalles of the Columbia, to 8° below. The snow remained upon the Wilhamette valley a foot in depth during three weeks.

An early extension of the jurisdiction and laws of the United States over Oregon would not only rapidly increase the agricultural productions of the country, but would develop mineral resources it has hitherto not been supposed to possess. No scientific explorations and surveys having yet been made, nothing of course is known beyond what is learned from a few casual observations. Minerals are usually found in mountainous portions of the country; but those in Oregon have been traversed by trappers and hunters only, who were incapable of making any examinations of the mineral resources of the countries over which they wandered. It is believed, however, that as the country becomes well populated by a civilized people, and scientific surveys are made, many valuable minerals will be discovered. Many persons, judging from the volcanic appearance of the country, believe that when metals shall be found, they will not be in their oxyds, but reduced by intense volcanic heat to a massive state. But there are some facts connected with the geology of the country which do not warrant this as a necessary conclusion. Your memorialist has found impure dark limestone, lying in thin sheets upon each other, and filled with a multitude of small fossil shells. In the immediate neighborhood he found basaltic rocks; and at a place a little more remote, scoriated basalt. At another locality he examined an immense bluff of yellow friable coarse sandstone. In the immediate vicinity was basalt; a little more remote, scoriated basalt. Near the mouth of the Columbia river a species of limestone is found, which, when burned and slacked, presents various colors, including orange, slate, yellow, and blue; near the place is basalt. At another locality, up the Wilhamette river, gray granite and basalt were found, very near to each other. The soil in many parts of the valley is colored by the oxide of iron; and your memorialist often found a species of the ore known as shot ore.

Red and yellow ochre and plumbago are brought down the Columbia by the Indians. Lead is reported to have been found in small quantities among the Blue mountains. Fibrous gypsum is found in immense bodies at the head of the Wilhamette valley, in the side of the Callapooiah mountain, where a branch of the Wilhamette comes out. Dr. Marcus Whitman, the gentleman in charge of the mission at Walla-Walla, informed your memorialist that a remarkably fine and beautiful species of gypsum may be obtained in inexhaustible quantities on John Day's river, not far from the way leading from the Dalles to Walla-Walla. He stated that it was also found upon Thompson's river. He also informed your memorialist that the Indians not unfrequently bring copper from a place north of his station, but south of 49 degrees. Specimens of platina ore have been brought from the country of the Flat Heads, and south of 49 degrees of north latitude. A Mr. Lattee, who was for a long time in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, informed your memorialist that the Indians often brought to the trading post platina and silver ore from the northern extremity of Queen Charlotte's island. There are coal indications near the Dalles of the Columbia, and also upon the Cowlitz river. An inexhaustible supply of bituminous coal of a good quality may be had upon Vancouver's island. It lies near the surface, is gotten out with crow-bars, and it is near to good anchorage.

Although these facts are necessarily very imperfect and meagre, yet they are sufficient to show that it is probable that metals, when found, will be found in their oxyds, and not reduced to a massive state by volcanic heat, as has generally been believed.

[A good wagon road.]

Your memorialist would respectfully state that the immigrants endure great fatigue, and are exposed to losses and perils, which might be avoided by surveying, marking out, and making a good wagon road from the western settlements of Missouri to the Wilhamette valley. Such road being once made, and small military posts established along the line of communication, many of the most formidable obstacles to the performance of the journey would be removed.

There is reason to believe that a nearer and better route into the settlements of Oregon may be had by leaving the Oregon road on Bear river, and then passing north of the great Salt lake to Ogden's river, and by crossing the Wyhee river and the Blue mountains north of Tlamath lake, so as to cross the President's range of mountains near some streams flowing into the Wilhamette. This route would probably conduct the immigrants into the Wilhamette valley a little south of Mount Jefferson, which is one of the great snow peaks of the President's range. Trappers in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company affirm that the valley of the Malheur river makes a good pass through the Blue mountains. Crooked river, which is a branch of the De Chutes, heads with Malheur river, and runs in a westerly direction. A road following these streams might, perhaps, be found, having sufficient grass.

That a pass may be found, in the President's range, near to Mount Jefferson, is made probable by the observations of Lieut. Frémont, in 1843, while travelling upon the river De Chutes. He says in his journal, page 119, that "a small trail takes off through the prairie, towards a low

point in the range, and perhaps there is here a pass into the Wilhamette valley." His camp that night was in latitude $45^{\circ} 2' 45''$ north, and longitude $125^{\circ} 2' 43''$.

[A cordon of military posts.]

A wagon road from the western settlements of Missouri being established and graded, and facilities being provided for crossing the principal streams, the next measure in the magnitude of its importance, as affording assistance and protection to the immigrants, is the establishment of military posts upon this road, and at points so selected as at the same time to keep the Indians in check, and to form the nucleus of settlements for production of supplies to the posts, and to immigrants. In addition to their ordinary duty, the soldiers might be employed with advantage in the transportation of the mail, or at least in the protection of those who might be engaged in that service. This would secure a more rapid, easy, and less perilous communication between the settlements west of the Rocky mountains and those east of them, and would vastly increase the number of immigrants from the latter to the former. Considered, then, as a purely political measure, tending to a rapid colonization of our possessions upon the Pacific, the establishment of a cordon of military posts is important and necessary.

Although your memorialist could indicate the places at which, in his judgment, it would be proper to establish said posts, and assign the reason for this his judgment; yet, knowing that if they are ever established, the fixing of their location will become the duty of competent officers appointed for that purpose, he deems it inexpedient to remark upon this subject, aware as he is of a very natural and even commendable professional jealousy. Yet, there being one location of which mere professional skill and science cannot enable their possessor to speak *ex cathedra*, or with so much authority as a very humble immigrant, who has made it his business to make practical observations, your memorialist most respectfully begs leave to say that there is no place upon the whole line of communication so important for the establishment of a military post as the Grand Round. Mere scientific travellers and explorers have, in consequence of their want of a sufficiently practical acquaintance with the wants, the toils, and dangers of the immigrants, as such, have hitherto wholly failed to see the importance of the position.

The Grand Round is one of the most beautiful and fertile valleys in Oregon, and is eminently adapted to agriculture and grazing purposes, if any reliance can be placed upon the statements of gentlemen who have passed through it. It lies in Middle Oregon, and is surrounded by the Blue mountains, upon which there is an abundant supply of fir, pine, and cedar. It is circular in form, as is denoted by its name. It is very productive, and is sufficiently watered by streams running through it, and these are also said to have timber upon them. The Oregon road passes through it. A settlement cannot now be made in it in consequence of the opposition of the Indians. The presence of a comparatively small military force here would remove every obstacle, by affording protection to immigrants, who would immediately fill it. Its extent is sufficient for a large country.

Immigrants who had been detained until the coming on of the rainy season, or whose teams were broken down, might remain here during

the winter, or they might finally determine upon making it their place of residence. Others, who might require it, could obtain fresh supplies at this place, and then continue their journey into the Willamette.

Immigrants could usually arrive at this point without encountering any difficulties which could not be surmounted by using a little more than ordinary prudence and diligence.

Did not your memorialist feel that in presenting the condition and wants of the people of Oregon, he had already occupied more time than would be expedient under other circumstances, he could present many reasons for the establishment of a military post at this place, and could call the attention of your honorable body to other circumstances which indicate this as being the most important point on the Oregon road for the establishment of a military post, if it be at all an object with the general government to afford protection and facilities to the immigrants.

[General effects of colonizing our possessions on the Pacific coast.]

Considered purely as a political measure, it cannot be otherwise than an important object to colonize our possessions on the Pacific coast as rapidly as possible. A flourishing State or States upon the western side of the continent would, by means of an armed occupation of the places at which an enemy could debark, effectually resist his approach. The nature of the coast and of the country is such that the possession of certain points commands the whole.

But a flourishing State upon the Pacific is important, not only as a military defence, but as opening the way for American enterprise and capital to the commerce of Asia, which would be turned to our western coast as soon as population and increased facilities for overland carriage will render it expedient for men of capital to send their commodities and merchandise through this channel, rather than round Cape Horn.

[For an appropriation for purchasing seeds and agricultural implements.]

Your memorialist is aware that your honorable body, moved by the high and noble impulses of humanity, were very recently about to appropriate many millions of the public treasure for men and arms for the benefit of the people of Yucatan, who are strangers to you in blood and in interest, in feeling, in language, and in laws, and who have never done anything to extend either your territory or your institutions. He is encouraged, therefore, to ask your honorable body to appropriate a few thousand dollars to be expended in purchasing seeds and fruits, and implements of husbandry, for the benefit of your poor, few, distant, neglected, and forgotten brethren in Oregon, who are one with you in blood, interest, feeling, language, and laws, and who, by removing to Oregon, and encountering all the toils and dangers of a long and exhausting journey, and the hardships and privations incident to a residence in that remote wilderness, have done much to extend both your territory and your institutions. There is not probably a gill of the seed of either red clover or blue grass in all Oregon. Nothing would give your memorialist more satisfaction than to be authorized to purchase seeds, fruits, and implements of husbandry, to be shipped on a vessel of war for the people of Oregon. While such a gift would be of infinite value to your distant

and (as they feel) neglected colonists, it would be in the highest degree honorable to your wisdom and humanity.

[Conclusion.]

In conclusion, your memorialist would observe, that although he has referred to several particular wants of Oregon, yet while it was necessary to say at least as much as he has upon these, he earnestly begs that you will never cease to feel that the first great want of the people whose wishes and interests he is faithfully laboring to present to your view, is an act establishing a Territorial government of some sort. Your memorialist beseeches you to pass a good act; but at least let the people of Oregon have a bad one, rather than none—any law, rather than no law. They have a right to your protection, and they need it at this moment. The Indians demand pay for their lands. Early in the autumn, several persons were wounded, and one was killed. His Excellency George Abernethy, governor of Oregon, despatched a letter to your memorialist, after he left Oregon city for the purpose of entering upon this mission, informing him that the Indians had renewed their outrages up the Columbia. Are your fellow-citizens thus to be any longer exposed to be robbed and butchered? Will you neither protect them, nor yet permit them to take a position in which they can provide permanently for their own defence against merciless savages?

The circumstances existing when your memorialist left Oregon, were such as to cause the most serious apprehension of a general Indian war. It is incredible that twelve thousand American citizens, more than three thousand miles distant from the seat of the metropolitan government, should neither be governed by you nor yet be permitted to make a declaration of independence, so as to place themselves in a position to discharge those duties incumbent upon them, and to enjoy those rights which are not denied to any of their brethren on the eastern side of the Rocky mountains; but which, if withheld, would deluge this country, and even this capital, with fraternal blood. Your memorialist would adopt the language of a report made by the lamented late Lieutenant Niel M. Howison, and published among your documents: "I must take leave to say, that good policy requires the parent government to retain the affections of this hopeful offspring, by attentions and fostering care. It needs help at this moment; and if it be rendered, a lasting sense of gratitude and dependence will be the consequence. But, if neglected in this its tender age, and allowed to fight its own way to independent maturity, the ties of consanguinity may be forgotten in the energy of its own unaided exertions."

J. QUINN THORNTON.